

TABLE I  
SKULL MEASUREMENTS OF SNOW LEOPARD (IN MM)

Total length	171	
Condylbasal length	145	
Zygomatic width	122.5	
Post Orbital Width	44.9	
Inter Orbital Width	40	
Maxillary Width	72.5	
Mandibular Length	115.2	
	Upper jaw	Lower jaw
Premolar 4	13.88	16.1
Molar 1	21.25	16.15

The 'dokpa' grazier had two previous sightings of snow leopard in this area. On July 27, 1998 it was sighted at Dongkung. It was last seen alive at Yabuk on September 10, 1998. He also recorded sightings of upto 30 blue sheep *Pseudois nayaur* in this area. Around 1100 yak and 2000 sheep belonging to 18 'dokpa' families also use the area.

Feral dogs have long infested the entire area where this animal was found. These dogs were brought to the Tibetan plateau as pups from lower altitudes by the army jawans for company. On finishing their stint in this 'difficult area' all the dogs were abandoned. These have since bred with the local Tibetan mastiff and multiplied by feeding off the kitchen wastes of the army camps. Today these feral dogs roam in packs on the plateau, living off marmots, woolly hare, Tibetan gazelle, blue sheep, young nayan and kiang as also domestic sheep, goats and young yak

including those animals which have been lamed by landmines. Usually nothing is done to control their number. Needless to say, pure breed of Tibetan mastiff, which is a master herder, also seems to have been irretrievably lost. It is difficult to quantify the feral dog population as the entire area, though under the jurisdiction of the Department of F. E. & WL, is under defence control, where civilian activities are severely and actively restricted.

All wildlife and domestic livestock on the Tibetan plateau of Sikkim are under severe stress due to various defence priorities. This area, known as the Chho Lhamo plateau, is perhaps the only one in the entire eastern and central Himalayas to have breeding populations of endangered species such as the southern kiang *Equus kiang polyodon*, lynx *Lynx lynx* and blacknecked crane *Grus nigricollis*, in addition to snow leopard — all listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act. The richness of the region has prompted the State Wildlife Advisory Board to propose its recognition as a cold desert protected area.

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#### 4. ON THE LONGEVITY OF THE TIGER (*PANTHERA TIGRIS*) IN CAPTIVITY

A white tigress named Diana-Subhra born at the National Zoological Park, New Delhi, on June 6, 1977, was received at the Nandankanan Zoological Park, Bhubaneswar, Orissa, on December 28, 1979. She died on February 28, 1999, after remaining 21 years, 8 months and 22 days in captivity.

The tigress was housed in an open-air enclosure with suitable vegetation. The enclosure had a set of retiring cells with cemented floor

for protection from extreme weather conditions and for feeding. She was fed with 14 kg of fresh raw beef with bones six days in a week. Intermittently, vitamin supplements were added to the beef. She was usually caged with her mate or her cubs.

During her lifetime in the park, she was paired with two tigers (one heterozygous normal coloured "Deepak" and one white "Debabrata") and she gave birth to 16 cubs (6 males and 10

females) in six litters, including three heterozygous normal coloured female cubs. The first litter was born on May 12, 1981 and the sixth litter on April 23, 1990.

According to Roychoudhury *et al.* (1989), the two white tigresses Mohini and Chameli born at Govindgarh Palace, Rewa on October 30, 1958, and March 24, 1962, died at Washington Zoo (U.S.A.) on April 6, 1979, and at Bristol Zoo (England) on August 23, 1982, at the age of 20 years, 5 months, 7 days and 20 years and 5 months respectively. A female Bengal tiger at the New York Zoological Park died at the age of 20 years, 7 months and 2 days (Crandall, 1965). A tigress of Alipore Zoological Gardens, Calcutta lived for 20 years and 3 months (Das, 1983). Under zoo conditions, the maximum longevity of tigers is 20 years, an age which is probably not exceeded in the wild (Schaller, 1967). The estimated life span of the tiger is about 20 years (Prater, 1971). Tigers have lived in captivity for 12 to 19 years (Walker *et al.*, 1964).

Flower (1931) says that there appears to be no definite record of a tiger living to 20 years and the greatest longevity listed by him is that of a Siberian tiger that lived for 19 years in the

Cologne Zoological Gardens. A tigress had lived for 19 years in the Zoological Gardens, Thrissur (Nair, 1957). A tiger of Nandankanan Zoological Park, Bhubaneswar died at the age of 18 years, 6 months and 10 days (Acharjyo and Patnaik, 1987).

Diana-Subhra's longevity of 21 years, 8 months and 22 days in this Park appears to be the longest so far recorded for this species in captivity.

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5. SIGHTING OF BARKING DEER (*MUNTIACUS MUNTJAC*) IN KALAKAD-MUNDANTHURAI TIGER RESERVE, TAMIL NADU

As part of our biodiversity studies, we were surveying the flora and fauna on the Mundanthurai Plateau, part of Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger

Reserve in Tirunelveli dist., Tamil Nadu. On October 15, 1997, the second day of our field work, one of us (JR), after completing sampling at three